

# News Release

## New Jersey Meadowlands Commission



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### NJMC Gives Tree Swallows New Homes

LYNDHURST, N.J. – The New Jersey Meadowlands Commission has started the annual installation of bird nesting boxes throughout the Meadowlands marshes. Many of the boxes were built by local volunteer groups and will be placed by NJMC staff.

“Once again, the community outreach of our staff has been matched by the enthusiasm of volunteer groups who share a remarkable concern for the environmental health of the Meadowlands,” said NJMC Chair and New Jersey Department of Community Affairs Commissioner Susan Bass Levin. “Their work has yielded nest boxes by the boatful and keeps our conservation efforts thriving.”

NJMC staff will install about 500 tree swallow nest boxes this spring. The first boxes were installed today at Richard W. DeKorte Park in Lyndhurst. More boxes will be installed at Mill Creek Marsh in Secaucus on Monday, March 20 at 11 a.m., March 21 at 11:45 a.m. and March 23 at noon. An installation ceremony will be held on March 25 at the Skeetkill Wetlands Enhancement Site in Ridgefield, which will include tree swallow boxes built by local Girl Scouts during a recent workshop in Ridgefield. All dates are weather permitting. The media is invited to cover these installation events.

The tree swallow is a 5 ½ inch bird with a metallic blue upper body and a white underbody that is indigenous to lakeshores, streams and marshes. A secondary cavity nester, this species lives in holes of dead trees which were hollowed out by other birds and animals. A decline in natural habitats for this species inspired people to start constructing nesting boxes for these birds.

“The tree swallow’s return to the Meadowlands signifies that spring has finally arrived,” said NJMC Executive Director Robert Ceberio. “It is a beautiful creature for our residents to observe and photograph, and a useful species for environmentalists to study. We have been committed to this conservation project for the last 10 years and will continue each year so this bird always has a home in the Meadowlands.”

The NJMC staff held workshops over the winter which gave area residents a chance to learn about the tree swallows and build nest boxes. There are 150 kestrel boxes, 24 duck boxes, 6 purple martin houses and osprey platforms which were placed in the Meadowlands last spring. Plans are in place for the construction of double-crested cormorant perches and chickadee nest boxes.

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